

4 participants and/or equipments into different groups according to a degree of  
5 significance; and

6 a plurality of remote client devices operatively connected to said schedule  
7 server, which allow client users to input schedules of said participants and/or  
8 equipments and request an idle time retrieval from said schedule server from  
9 different groups of schedules of said participants and/or equipments according to  
10 said degree of significance so as to retrieve the idle time corresponding to said  
11 degree of significance among said different groups.

1 **11. (Twice Amended)** A schedule management system, comprising:  
2 a schedule server which stores schedules of participants and schedules of  
3 equipments reserved by ones of said participants in different groups; and

4 a plurality of remote client devices operatively connected to said schedule  
5 server, which allow client users to input schedules of said participants and  
6 equipments, and request an idle time retrieval from said schedule server,  
7 wherein said schedule server comprises one or more databases which store  
8 schedules of participants and schedules of equipments reserved by ones of said  
9 participants, and a multistageous idle time retrieval unit which divides schedules  
10 registered for participants and equipments into a plurality of groups according to a  
11 degree of significance and retrieves an idle time common from one group as a  
12 retrieval condition for retrieving an idle time common for another group of said  
13 plurality of groups.

1 **12. (Twice Amended)** A method for managing schedules of participants

2 in a schedule server in connection with remote client devices, comprising:  
3       storing schedules of participants in different groups in memory of the  
4 schedule server;  
5       enabling a user from one of remote client devices to select one or more  
6 groups of participants and to request retrieval of a designated idle time common to  
7 selected groups of participants from the schedule server;  
8       accepting the user's request as a retrieval condition for retrieving the  
9 designated idle time common to all participants in said selected groups of  
10 participants;  
11       obtaining a retrieval result of an idle time common to participants in one of  
12 said selected groups of participants;  
13       using the retrieval result of an idle time common to participants in said one of  
14 said selected groups of participants as a retrieval condition for retrieving an idle time  
15 common to all participants in another one of said selected groups of participants  
16 until the designated idle time common to participants in all of said selected groups of  
17 participants is retrieved as a final retrieval result; and  
18       outputting said final retrieval result indicating the designated idle time  
19 common to all participants in said selected groups of participants.

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1       **13. (Twice Amended)**     A schedule server apparatus coupled to terminal  
2 apparatuses allocated to schedule-reserving persons and schedule-reserved  
3 persons through a communication line for retrieving idle time of a schedule,  
4 comprising:  
5       communication control means for transmitting data to said terminal

6       apparatuses and for receiving data from said terminal apparatuses; and  
7            retrieving means for dividing each of schedules registered for a plurality of  
8       participants and/or a plurality of equipments into a plurality of groups according to a  
9       degree of significance and retrieving common idle time among said plurality of  
10      groups according to said degree of significance of respective groups of participants  
11      and/or equipments.

1           **14. (Twice Amended)**     A computer readable medium comprising  
2       instructions for retrieving idle time of a schedule that, when executed by a schedule  
3       server in connection with remote client devices, perform the method comprising:  
4            storing schedules of participants in different groups in memory of the  
5       schedule server;  
6            enabling a user from one of remote client devices to select one or more  
7       groups of participants and to request retrieval of a designated idle time common to  
8       selected groups of participants from the schedule server;  
9            accepting the user's request as a retrieval condition for retrieving the  
10      designated idle time common to all participants in said selected groups of  
11      participants;  
12           obtaining a retrieval result of an idle time common to participants in one of  
13      said selected groups of participants;  
14           using the retrieval result of an idle time common to participants in said one of  
15      said selected groups of participants as a retrieval condition for retrieving an idle time  
16      common to all participants in another one of said selected groups of participants  
17      until the designated idle time common to participants in all of said selected groups of

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